

The next day, July 16, the 3rd Battalion of the 6th Marine Regiment landed, with the 1st Battalion of the 8th Marine Regiment arriving on the 18th. Two Army battle groups in Germany, the 187th Airborne and 503rd Airborne, were on call and could arrive in the area within twelve hours. In addition, tactical aircraft were flown to Turkey and the Sixth Fleet was reinforced.

General Twining also recommended the deployment of Air Force tankers into forward positions, as well as an increased level of readiness for the Strategic Air Command. According to Eisenhower, Twining advised him that these moves would be visible and might cause some misinterpretation of U.S. intentions, to which the President responded by ordering the moves precisely to underscore U.S. "readiness and determination without implying any threat of aggression."²⁸

Other military preparations were considered as well, such as the movement overseas of two full divisions. But "shipping was short," and Eisenhower decided not to charter additional vessels. Instead he merely ordered Twining "to keep a roster of available shipping." "Part of the 82nd Airborne Division [however] was held ready for quick airlift to Europe."²⁹

Finally, and presumably in response to British urgings, Eisenhower approved a recommendation from the Joint Chiefs for a seaborne movement of a Marine Corps regimental combat team then stationed on Okinawa to the Persian Gulf. There, in Eisenhower's view, it could help deter an Iraqi move into Kuwait or help protect other friendly governments. Twining was ordered to "be prepared to employ, subject to [Eisenhower's] approval, whatever means might become necessary to prevent any unfriendly forces from moving into Kuwait."³⁰ It seems clear that Eisenhower was referring to the possible use of nuclear weapons, an issue that was discussed several times during the crisis.

Despite pressure from Macmillan, Eisenhower decided against send-

28. Eisenhower, *Waging Peace*, p. 276. In his memoirs, *Neither Liberty Nor Safety: A Hard Look at U.S. Military Policy and Strategy* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966), pp. 64-65, General Nathan Twining takes a very hawkish view of the Lebanon crisis, arguing that the State Department "backpedaled" by ordering U.S. troops not to go into Lebanon with nuclear-tipped rockets. On page 148 he claims that "the Soviet bluff to take over Lebanon was called" by U.S. military action in the crisis.

29. Eisenhower, *Waging Peace*, p. 276.

30. Ibid., p. 278; emphasis in original.

Lebanon, 1958,

ing U.S. troops Kingdom with some equipment even contemplated Dhahran in Saudi Arabia such an operation Eisenhower from

At peak strength more than 14,000 Sixth Fleet, with support of the 1st Fleet from the United States, were flown from bases

As the crisis ended the last contingents of troops incurred involving registered, the re-

The Relations

The use of force in Lebanon, U.S. troops were ordered if necessary virtually no hostility worked closely with intended confrontations was on the objectives was accomplished Chamoun regime Robert Murphy as 7-1 summarizes the

A second objective use of U.S. troops coordinate carefully

31. Ibid., p. 280.

32. Lt. Col. M. M. Military Review (Febr

Table 7-1 (continued)

Date	Military moves	Diplomatic moves	Events in Lebanon	International reaction
July 31		Eisenhower and Macmillan propose summit meeting to be held August 12 (letters to Khrushchev).	Chehab elected president.	UN Observer Force makes 2nd report; finds no evidence of infiltration from UAR.
Aug. 1				
Aug. 2	1,800 more troops and tank battalion land, 3,000 more on way.			
Aug. 3	U.S. lands 2,200 more troops. Total now 13,300.			
Aug. 4	Anglo-American airlift over Israel ceases.			
Aug. 5				Khrushchev withdraws support for summit conference after visit to Peking.

ing a major combined operation in the Middle East, while facilitating the more limited task of moving British forces into Jordan and keeping them adequately supplied. As part of this package the United States apparently agreed to help look after British oil interests, especially in Kuwait. To fulfill the conditions of this agreement the United States transferred to the Middle East some forces from Okinawa. It seems unlikely that the new regime in Iraq was contemplating an attack on Kuwait at that time, but the movement of forces to the Persian Gulf was as much intended to reassure the British as to deter Qasim. The net effect of these U.S. military moves was to guarantee that the British acted in Jordan on the same pattern as the Americans in Lebanon. While Macmillan was less than overjoyed with the scope of the operations, he was unable to move independently and thus British policy fell into line with that chosen by Eisenhower. Once again Eisenhower succeeded in achieving one of his specific objectives.

The more sweeping goals of preventing the spread of Nasserism and communism were beyond the reach of U.S. and British policy. How the use of force could achieve such goals, short of mounting coups d'état in Damascus, Baghdad, and Cairo, was a bit of a mystery. While the regimes in Beirut and Amman were able to achieve a degree of stability and strength thanks to U.S. and British support, the forces of radical nationalism remained strong in the Arab world and were essentially unaffected by the Lebanon crisis and the U.S. reaction to it. Measured by the maximum objective of thwarting Nasserism, Eisenhower's decisions were not a success, and shortly after the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Lebanon in October the Eisenhower Doctrine was effectively put on ice and a new policy of attempted rapprochement with Nasser was initiated.

Reflecting on the crisis, Eisenhower certainly felt that the use of force had been justified in terms of the limited objectives sought. In his memoirs Eisenhower termed the operation "highly satisfactory," crediting it with the achievement of a peaceful resolution of the Lebanese internal conflict.³³

One additional benefit to the West, intangible and unpublicized but nevertheless important, came out of the affair. This was a definite change in Nasser's attitude toward the United States. . . . In our action and the Kremlin's cautious reaction he found much food for thought, it would appear. Presumably he concluded that he could not depend completely on Russia to help him in any

11. Eisenhower, *Waging Peace*, pp. 288-89.

Middle East struggle, and he certainly had his complacency as to America's helplessness completely shattered.³⁴

From Eisenhower's perspective, it seems clear, a major achievement of the Lebanon operation was the demonstration that the United States was capable of acting decisively, a lesson that he apparently thought was particularly important to convey to the USSR and to the nonaligned countries in mid-1958.

The Impact on Domestic Lebanese Politics

The U.S. intervention in Lebanon stimulated a search for a political solution to the crisis. A successor to Chamoun had to be found who was acceptable to the Arab nationalists as well as the Christian community. General Fuad Chehab, head of the army, quickly emerged as a man capable of attracting broad support. He had the advantage of being relatively nonpartisan, not tied to the traditional establishment, and sufficiently neutralist in his ideology to be tolerated by the Nasserists. He was easily chosen as president on July 31 and subsequently named one of the prominent leaders of the insurgents, Rashid Karami, as prime minister.

Under Chehab's presidency Lebanon recovered quickly from its civil war; a strong executive emerged and Lebanon once again began to develop rapidly. But underlying social and economic problems were not resolved; the rigidities of the sectarian-based political system were not eliminated; and under the weak leadership of the 1960s strains began to appear.

After the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, external pressures on Lebanon mounted, leading to a severe crisis in 1969 over the issue of the Palestinian presence in Lebanon. In subsequent years tensions remained acute, and Lebanese political life began to polarize along a complex sectarian and class-based line. By 1975 civil war had once again engulfed Lebanon, resulting in the Syrian military intervention of early 1976. Unlike the 1958 civil war, however, neither major power showed an interest in intervening militarily. The 1958 crisis had done little to help solve Lebanon's internal problems, and perhaps that realization served as a note of caution for outside powers when the much more bloody and prolonged civil war began in 1975.

34. Ibid., p. 290.

Egyptian Reactions

Egypt's President Nasser was clearly one of the primary targets of the U.S. policy adopted in January 1957 and implemented in Lebanon in July 1958. It is thus worth investigating how he reacted to the landing of U.S. forces.

At the time of the Lebanon crisis, Nasser was at the peak of his career as an Arab nationalist leader. After the Suez crisis in 1956 his status in Egypt and elsewhere in the Arab world had grown. Radical nationalists in numerous Arab countries looked to him for inspiration and support. The Syrian Baath party went so far as to plead for political union with Egypt, which was realized with the creation of the UAR early in 1958.

Nasser had ambivalent feelings toward the United States. From 1952 to 1954 he was on close terms with U.S. officials and was viewed in Washington as a promising moderate Arab leader. The conclusion of an arms deal with the USSR in 1955, however, had cooled the relationship between Cairo and Washington considerably, and the Dulles-Eisenhower decision to withdraw the offer to finance the Aswan High Dam in mid-1956 was a further blow to the chances of maintaining friendly ties. Eisenhower's stand against the British, French, and Israeli attack on Egypt in October 1956 created a momentary sense of gratitude on the part of Nasser, but the subsequent development of the Eisenhower Doctrine, so clearly aimed at "containing" Nasserism, undermined what little goodwill existed toward the United States in Cairo. By 1958 Nasser was deeply suspicious of U.S. intentions in the area. A conspirator by background and distrustful by nature, Nasser saw the United States actively working against him throughout the Arab world.

Although Nasser was an advocate of Arab unity he had entered the union with Syria only reluctantly. There was no indication that he hoped to add Lebanon to the UAR, although he clearly did oppose the strongly pro-American policies of President Chamoun. When incipient civil war broke out in Lebanon in May, Nasser no doubt helped to provide arms and money to his supporters.

Nonetheless, Nasser did not seem to want a full-scale test of strength in Lebanon. In June, Nasser surprised Eisenhower by not objecting to the dispatch of UN observer teams to Lebanon. This was followed by a direct bid from Nasser to the United States offering to use his influence to end the crisis in Lebanon. The conditions that he posed were that